

Suie Graveyard
Glen Dochart
by Killin
Archaeological Graveyard Recording
REPORT
KJ15



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**SUIE GRAVEYARD
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Illustration 1: Site Location Plan

Illustration 2: Detailed Site Location Plan

Illustration 3: Detailed Site Plan, Suie Burial Ground

Illustration 4: Results of Probing for Gravestones

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ABSTRACT

Alder Archaeology was commissioned Mrs Emma Paterson, Auchlyne to undertake an archaeological survey of the McNab burial ground at Suie in Glen Dochart, by Killin (NGR NN 49004 28003). The work (KJ 15) was undertaken during three visits in March 2010. The survey was to be a record of the site prior to tree removal and remedial works to the enclosure which was in an unstable condition. The archaeological work comprised a topographical survey of the site, a written record of the memorials and grave markers, a photographic record and probing to note the possible site of buried slabs. It was noted that an early Christian cross incised stone had started to fracture.

1 Background

1.1 Introduction

Mrs Paterson of Auchlyne commissioned Alder Archaeology to undertake an archaeological survey on the site of the Suie Burial Ground in Glen Dochart near Killin. The burial ground is located within Stirling District Council and the Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park Authority. The work was required in advance of tree cutting and repairs to the enclosure. The site is centred on NGR NN 49004 28003. The work (KJ15) was undertaken during 3 visits 1st, 10th and 17th March 2010. The weather conditions were good for the survey work carried out but the ground on the first visit was snow covered and frozen. Frozen ground hampered the completion of the probing on the second visit and a third visit was required.

1.2 Aims and Objectives

The main aim of this investigation was to record the current state of the burial ground before tree-cutting, repairs and consolidation began. Probing was undertaken to establish if there were further grave slabs immediately below the turf which could be adversely affected by the remedial work. The record will help guide the process of repair and also ensure that any details which may be unavoidably obscured or altered are recorded first.

1.3 Reporting

The present document has been prepared as the final report on this survey. Copies will be sent to the client, The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland, Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park and Stirling Council SMR. Digital archives will be submitted through the OASIS portal and a short account will be published in *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland*.

1.4 Planning and Curatorial Issues

Alder Archaeology produced a Written Scheme of Investigation for the archaeological survey based on terms of reference prepared by Lorna Main, Stirling Council Archaeology Officer, dated 29th October 2009. Close contact was also maintained with Karen Hind Conservation Officer Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority.

1.5 Acknowledgements

Alder Archaeology wish to thank Mrs Paterson of Auchlyne for her cooperation and assistance throughout the project. Thanks are also due to Lorna Main, Stirling Council Archaeology Officer and Karen Hind Conservation Officer Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority for their assistance and guidance throughout this project. The project was funded by Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority.

2 Details of Work

2.1 Archaeological Potential (Illus 1 and 2)

The Suie graveyard is a very small enclosed private burial ground on a well-defined platform standing above the floodplain on the north bank of the river Dochart. The surrounding area is grass meadow. The platform may be natural in origin, but today is close to subrectangular in form. The platform is partially enclosed by a low bank, within which is a rectangular drystone wall enclosure, built by John McNab of Inshoan (Innishewen) in 1759. There is a later small annex abutting the NW side and also an enclosure of metal railings on the SW side. The main enclosure walls have been damaged by tree growth in the SE corner and the NW corner. Collapse has taken place in the SE angle, at the N end of the W wall and at the S end of the W wall. The N and E walls of the annex has also partially collapsed, mainly due to poor construction.

About twelve gravestones were originally visible, some obviously of 18th century date. It was considered that other stones might come to light in the course of survey, as well as evidence of unmarked graves. There is a small early medieval tapered cross standing externally at the SE corner of the enclosure.

It was considered that the present features on the site mainly date from the 18th century, but it obviously has a much longer history, and could have been an early church site.

Mature trees and other vegetation have grown up on the platform, and have damaged the enclosure wall, especially at the SE corner. It is intended to remove some of the trees and vegetation, and repair and stabilise the walls.

2.2 Archaeological Method

The burial ground survey included a topographic survey of the mound and features on the mound, surveyed with a total station from three stations around the mound (Illus 3).

A photographic survey of the site using a digital single lens reflex camera was taken. The grave markers were numbered and each stone was recorded in detail and general shots were taken of the mound and the enclosures.

Information regarding the burial ground and individual grave markers/memorials was entered on the Council for Scottish Archaeology Graveyard Recording Form and Gravestone Recording forms.

Ground probing for buried grave markers or grave slabs was undertaken with a hand held metal probe with a rounded end using a grid laid out at metre intervals with probing approximately every 33cm (Illus 4). This spacing was chosen as being convenient to set out on the ground, using lines 1 m apart, probed every third of a metre, and based on the expectation that adult graves and even most juvenile graves would be more than 1 m long and 0.33 m wide, and would be intercepted at least once.

A positive response, most likely to indicate buried markers, was recorded when the probe met with a solid, unmoving object, producing a dull, hollow sound. Other solid objects encountered that did not have the hollow resonance were considered more likely to be larger natural stones or perhaps wall tumble rather than stone slabs. The difference in sound and feel was quite marked, no doubt because the mechanical properties of a flat slab are quite different from those of a more compact mass, such as block or a boulder.

2.3 Results of Investigations (Illus 3 and 4)

2.3.1 Topographic Survey

The burial ground survey included a topographic survey of the mound and features on the mound. A pathway was noted on the N side of the mound, with a bank marking a possible former wall location to the E of the pathway. A mound/bank was also noted on the S side of the enclosure, close to mound edge, which also may be the remains of an earlier enclosure wall or possibly the remains of a chapel. What was considered a possible pathway on the S side of the mound led up past the W end of the bank to the entrance in the S wall of the enclosure.

The main enclosure measures 8m E-W and 4.3m N-S. The walls are 0.60m thick and 1.80m high, of mortared local field stone topped with half round copes. An open doorway 0.90m wide is located mid S wall. The walls of the main enclosure have been disturbed and damaged by tree growth in the SE corner and the NW corner. Serious collapse has taken place at the SE angle and has damaged the early Christian stone (03). Collapse has also occurred at the N and S ends of the W wall.

Associated with the general tumble were three long narrow slabs which had no discernable markings. Two were being used to prop up the metal gate blocking the entrance, and one lay in the tumble at the SE corner of the enclosure, directly beside the early Christian stone. The one at the SE corner had mortar adhering and was perhaps used as a through stone in the construction of the enclosure. Conceivably these stones may have been reused former grave markers predating the McNab enclosure. They were not formally recorded as gravestones, because they are unmarked and featureless, and are clearly not in their original positions or even fixed to the ground at all. However, they are clearly shown on photographs of the entrance and the SE corner, for example 01 March 2010 images 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 10 March 2010 images 79, 80, 81, 82, 109, 111, 112, and 113.

It is recommended that these stones be kept on site.

Abutting the main enclosure N wall at the W end is a smaller enclosure or annex measuring 3.70m E-W and 2m N-S. It has walls 1.45m high and 0.60m wide with an open entrance at the W end. The N and E walls of the annex have also partially collapsed, mainly due to poor construction. The latest phase of construction is the enclosure of metal railings, close to the SW corner of the enclosure, which measures 1.60m E-W and 1.20m N-S and contains one upright inscribed gravestone. The metal railings post date the inscribed stone.

2.3.2 Gravestone Recording

In total 14 grave markers were examined and recorded. Inside the metal railings was one standing inscribed gravestone (02). To the S of the metal railing enclosure three unmarked stones were recorded (01, 12 and 13). On the W side of the main enclosure W wall one inscribed recumbent stone (09) and two uninscribed (10-11) recumbent stones were recorded. Within the main enclosure there were four inscribed gravestones in relatively good condition (04-07) with one being a large mural memorial (04) set into the E wall. In the small enclosure 2 stones were recorded (08 and 14). The latest inscribed date visible was 1908 on stone (06) within the enclosure. An early Christian marker (03) was recorded outwith the S end of the E wall at the SE corner of the main

enclosure. A stone dedicated to the erection of the main enclosure, by John McNab of Inshoan (Innishewen) in 1759, was set mid N wall interior.

The gravestones varied in form from a formal mural monument in the E wall of the main enclosure to unmarked recumbent slabs. All inscriptions related to the McNab family and none predated the erection of the enclosure. The most important marker (03) was located just outwith the SE corner of the main enclosure. This marker was an upright tapered stone with a faint but large cross incised on the SE face and a much smaller but more visible cross incised on the NW face. The marker is considered important because it represents an early Christian stone and may well indicate that the mound was in use as an early chapel site/burial ground although there is no record of this. The marker is cracked on its upper edge and may require remedial attention.

2.3.3 Ground Probing

Positive results were found to the S and E of the railing enclosure and to the N of the 3 slabs outside the W wall. Rather surprisingly, within the enclosure there was little in the way of positive responses. The results of the probing are shown in Illus 4. It was beyond the scope of the present investigation to excavate the positive responses, and definitely identify them as grave markers.

3 Interpretation

The topographical survey produced a plan of the mound and the McNab enclosure with the burial ground features and locations of all visible grave memorials/markers. The plan reveals the possibility of two pathways, on the N and S sides up to top of the mound. Since the enclosure entrance is on the S side it is logical to suggest that the pathway on the S side of the mound was the main access route although the path on the N side is less steep. The plan also shows the near rectangular shape of the platform indicating the possibility of scarping the natural mound top for use as a burial ground, probably predating its use by the McNabs.

There was some possible evidence of the remains of earlier walls around the top of the mound on the S and E sides in the form of banks. Probing these features indicated that there was some buried stonework but its form could not be determined. It is possible that these banks may relate to the foundations of an early chapel on the site but this is unlikely as they are too close to the edge of the mound. If there was an earlier chapel its upstanding remains were no doubt destroyed with the building of the main enclosure in 1759 and by the subsequent burials, however there was no evidence of reused stonework that could relate to a chapel in the enclosure walls. There were however at least three long narrow slabs associated with the tumble which could be early graveslabs predating the enclosure. Evidence of early use of the site can only be deduced from the existence of the early Christian stone at the SE corner of the enclosure and perhaps from the Suie name itself meaning 'seat'.

4 Conclusions and Recommendations

The McNab burial enclosure and burial ground may postdate an earlier Christian presence on the mound the form of which may have been a chapel or just a burial ground possibly surrounded by an enclosure wall. Early Christian use as a burial ground is shown by the cross incised stone at the SE corner outside the enclosure. The

present survey has recorded additional evidence of early use, in the shape of the mound, the traces of banks enclosing it, and possible early marker stones now displaced.

The inscribed stones are 18th, 19th and 20th centuries. The latest readable inscribed date is 1908, around which time the burial ground must have gone out of use. None of the inscribed stones predated the erection of the enclosure.

It was noted that the early Christian cross incised stone was damaged and may require remedial work. Care should be taken when lifting collapsed rubble, repairing the wall and generally working around this stone. Any further grave markers or other important features that may be found to underlie collapsed material from the enclosure walls should be reported to Lorna Main, Stirling Council Archaeology Officer.

Any long, narrow, undecorated and apparently natural stone slabs lying amongst the rubble may well be early grave markers which should be retained on site.

5 Bibliography

Suie Graveyard, Glen Dochart, by Killin, Archaeological Graveyard Recording, Written Scheme of Investigation. Issued by Alder Archaeology 17 February 2010

Suie Graveyard, Glen Dochart, Killin Terms of Reference, Graveyard and Gravestone Recording. Issued by Lorna Main Stirling Council Archaeology Officer, 29 October 2009

Appendix 1 Photographic Register

<i>Digital</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>View</i>
	01 March 2010 KJ15	
001-002	General of site	NE
003	General of enclosure E wall, S end	N
004	Enclosure S wall W end	N
005	Enclosure S wall mid, doorway	N
006	Enclosure S wall mid, doorway	N
007	Enclosure S wall E end	N
008	Enclosure S wall mid	N
009	Enclosure E wall S end	W
010	Enclosure SE corner	NW
011	Detail of early Christian stone 03	NNW
012	Enclosure E wall mid to N end	NNW
013	Detail of enclosure E wall S end	W
014	Enclosure SE corner	NW
015	Enclosure N wall E end	S
016	Annex on E wall	W
017-18	Enclosure annex N wall E end	S
019	Enclosure annex N wall W end	S
020	Enclosure annex walls W end	E
021-022	Enclosure annex interior	E
023	Enclosure N wall part of W end (within area of annex)	S
024	Enclosure annex interior	W
025	Enclosure W wall N end showing collapse	E
026	Enclosure W wall S end	E
027	Metal railings enclosure around gravestone 02	NNE

028	Gravestone 02 within railings	W
029	Railings enclosure N side	S
030	Enclosure interior E wall, with gravestone 04	E
031	Enclosure interior general	E
032	Enclosure interior N wall mid and E end	N
033-34	Enclosure interior N wall mid dedication stone set in wall	N
035	Enclosure interior N wall W end	N
036-37	Enclosure interior W wall	W
38	Enclosure interior W wall S end	W
39	Enclosure interior memorial 07	W
40	Enclosure interior memorial 06	W
41	Enclosure interior S wall W end and central opening	SW
42	Enclosure interior S wall E end and part of central opening	S
43-44	Enclosure interior S wall with central opening	SW
45	Enclosure interior memorial 04	E
46	Enclosure interior memorial 04	NE
47-48	Enclosure interior memorial 05	W
49	Enclosure interior memorial 05	SW
50-51	Enclosure interior memorial 06	W
52-53	Enclosure interior memorial 07	W
54-56	Enclosure exterior memorial 02	W&NW
57-58	Enclosure exterior memorial 01	W
59	Enclosure exterior memorial 01	E
60	Enclosure exterior memorial 01	N
61	General working setting up the EDM	NW
62-64	General of graveyard mound	SE
65-66	Enclosure exterior memorial 03	N
67	Enclosure exterior memorial 03	SE

68	Enclosure exterior memorial 03	SW
69	Enclosure exterior memorial 03, detail of cracking	SW
70	Memorial 03 detail of cracking	W
71	Memorial 03 detail of cracking	NW
72	Memorial 03 detail of cross on NW face	SE
73-74	Memorial 03 detail of cross on NW face	SE
75	Memorial 03, general	NW
76	General of exterior of enclosure E wall S end	W
77	Memorial 04 detail	E
	10 March 2010	
78-81	Working, probing , S side of enclosure	E
82-83	Working, probing, S side of enclosure	NW
84-85	Enclosure exterior, W side, memorial 09	W
86-87	Memorial slab 09 detail of inscription	W
88-91	Memorial slab 10	W
92	Memorial slab 11	W
93	Memorial slabs 09, 10 and 11	NW
94	Memorial slab 09	W
95	Memoriald slab 09, detail of inscription	W
96-99	Broken memorial slab 08 , in annex	S
100	Broken memorial 08	E
101-102	Memorial slab 14 and memorial 08	E
103	Working, recording memorial slab 12, S side of enclosure	NW
104	Working, recording memorial slab 12	SW
105	Memorial slab 12	N
106	Memorial slab 12	NW
107-108	Memorial slab 13, S side of enclosure	W
109	Enclosure entrance with temperary blocking	N

110	Enclosure exterior SE angle wall collapse	N
111	Enclosure exterior SE angle wall collapse	W
112	Enclosure exterior SE angle wall collapse	NW
113	Enclosure exterior SE angle and E wall	NW
114	Annex E wall, collapse	W
115	Annex W wall collapse	NE
116	Annex W wall collapse	E
117	Annex W wall collapse	E
118-120	General of burial ground and mound	NW
	17 March 20010	
121-124	Fallen top section of mural monument 04	E
125	Monument 05 showing bottom line of inscription	W
126	General of monument 04	SE
127	General of monument 05	SW
128	General of monument 04	SE
129	General of monument 08 with soil removed from broken top part	S
130	Detail of monument 08	S
131	General of monument 08	SW

Appendix 2 Drawing Register

<i>Sheet No.</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Scale</i>
1	Field sketch of mound features and grave stones	Not to scale
2	Plan of probing results	1:100

Appendix 3 Discovery & Excavation in Scotland Entry

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Stirling
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Suie Burial Ground, Glen Dochart, by Killin
PROJECT CODE:	KJ15
PARISH:	Killin
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR(S):	Ray Cachart
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Alder Archaeology Ltd
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Burial ground Survey prior to Remedial Work
NMRS NO(S):	NN42NE 3
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Burial ground, cross incised stone
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	Possible buried grave markers
NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures)	Site centred on NN49004 28003
START DATE	01 March 2010
END DATE	17 March 2010
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. <i>DES</i> ref.)	None
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	Alder Archaeology was commissioned Mrs Emma Paterson, Auchlyne to undertake an archaeological survey of the McNab burial ground at Suie in Glen Dochart, by Killin (NGR NN 49004 28003). The work (KJ15) was undertaken during 3 visits in March 2010. The survey was to be a record of the site prior to tree removal and remedial works to the enclosure which was in an unstable condition. The archaeological work comprised a topographical survey of the site, a written record of the memorials and grave markers, a photographic record and probing to find any buried slabs. It was noted that an early cross incised stone had started to fracture.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority.
CAPTIONS FOR ILLUSTRATIONS	None
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	Alder Archaeology Ltd, 55 South Methven Street, Perth PH1 5NX
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended)	NMRS

EMAIL ADDRESS:	Director@AlderArchaeology.co.uk
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Appendix 4 Standard Terms of Reference for all Fieldwork

4.1 Recording Methodology

Alder Archaeology employs a Single Context Recording System that allows full cross-referencing of stratigraphy, finds and environmental samples, as well as site-wide phasing. All features will be planned at scale 1:20, and sections drawn at scale 1:10. Sections and profiles will be drawn and all features will be photographed with metric scale included. Environmental samples will be taken from archaeologically significant contexts, if the analysis of these samples would aid significantly in the interpretation of any features identified.

4.2 Human Remains

If human remains are encountered they will be left in situ and the local police will be informed. If removal is required this will take place in compliance with Historic Scotland's Policy Paper *The Treatment of Human Remains in Archaeology*.

4.3 Products and Reporting

A Data Structure Report will normally be prepared within a period agreed within the Written Scheme of Investigation/ Project Design, after the completion of the fieldwork. This forms the basic level of reporting. Further reporting may be required on the basis of discoveries made during excavations.

A copy of the report and the project archive will be deposited in the NMRS. Further copies will be sent to the client, LAAO and others, as appropriate.

4.4 Artefacts

Finds of objects will be subject to the Scots Laws of Treasure Trove and *Bona Vacantia*. We will report such finds, if recovered, with supporting documentation to the Secretariat of the Treasure Trove Panel for disposal to the appropriate museum.

4.5 Discovery and Excavation in Scotland

A brief summary of the results will be submitted to *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland*.

4.6 General Conditions and Health and Safety

We adhere to the Code of Conduct of the Institute for Archaeologists.

Alder Archaeology Ltd has public liability insurance of £5,000,000. Details of this can be provided on request.

We operate a strict health and safety policy and conforms to the Health and Safety at Work Act. We undertakes Risk Assessments on all fieldwork carried out.

Alder Archaeology representatives will at all times wear protective footwear, high visibility clothing and other appropriate clothing. Hard hats will be worn if there is active plant on site or at all times if the site is deemed a hard hat area.

If lightly contaminated deposits are uncovered disposable boiler suits and gloves will be worn. A source of clean water will be made available for staff to clean hands with. If the health risk posed by site contamination is felt to be too high all further archaeological work will stop in that area.